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PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION
ON THE
ASSASSINATION OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY

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March 20, 1964

MEMORANDUM FOR THE STAFF

FROM: J. LEE RANKIN, GENERAL COUNSEL

In a memorandum of March 12, 1964, I advised all members of the staff that the fact of prior interviews with witnesses, as well as the existence of material inconsistencies, should be developed fully on the record. The purpose of this memorandum is to suggest methods by which this objective should be accomplished.

1. It is the obligation of the staff member to develop fully in recorded testimony (either before the Commission or on deposition) the existence of material inconsistencies between the witness' recorded testimony and information which the witness has given in prior interviews with investigatory agencies or members of the Commission's staff. When these inconsistencies are developed, the witness should be asked to state whether the testimony which he has now given, as distinct from that which he has given previously, is the correct version of the facts. Moreover, the witness should be asked to explain why and how he has come to believe that the testimony he has just given is correct.

2. At the conclusion of the witness' testimony, he should be asked whether he has been interviewed by any member of the Commission's staff. The date of such interview and the name of the staff member involved should be elicited. In accordance with the objectives stated above, the witness should be asked whether there are any inconsistencies between these interviews and his recorded testimony which have not yet been developed on the record. He should also be asked whether he provided any material information in these interviews which has not yet been developed on the record. If these questions should elicit the existence of material inconsistencies, the procedures outlined in paragraph one should be utilized to record and explain these inconsistencies.